

## **2010 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

### **BACKGROUND**

The second half of the 61<sup>st</sup> Legislature will start on Monday, January 11 and end after 60 days on March 11. The biggest issues to be addressed will be the revenue shortfall and the need to balance the budget. The State's revenue is predicted to create a \$2.6 billion shortfall for the remainder of the 2009 - 2011 biennium budget.

### **Governor Gregoire's Proposed 2010 Supplemental Budget**

Governor Gregoire released her Supplemental Budget in December, which by law needs to be balanced and without any proposed revenue. In order to balance the budget, the Governor proposed using the remaining budget stabilization funds, increasing government efficiency through program consolidation and elimination, and making cuts across state government.

The current budget has 71 percent protected under state constitutional or federal requirements. This leaves less than 30 percent, or about \$9 billion, available for the Governor to modify through reductions or eliminations and nearly 25 percent of this amount has already been spent. The Governor's proposed budget eliminates or reduces the following programs for the 2010-11 school year:

- Levy equalization is eliminated in Calendar Year 2011 (\$143 million).
- K-4 Class Size Enhancement is eliminated (\$111 million).
- Student achievement program (I-728) funds are eliminated (\$79 million).
- All-day Kindergarten is eliminated (\$34 million).
- The remaining state-funded Learning Improvement Day is eliminated (\$15 million).
- Funding for the Highly Capable Program is eliminated (\$7.4 million).
- Reductions in Alternative Routes to Certification and Focused Assistance — by half (\$3.6 million).
- Some smaller programs are also eliminated (\$14 million).
- In addition, some cuts were made in the remaining 2009-10 school year, including current year funding for Focused Assistance, Readiness to Learn, and Navigation 101 (\$2.7 million).

In January, the Governor will release a second budget known as "Book Two." She will propose in the Book Two budget revenue of approximately \$700 million to buy back some of the cuts and eliminations outlined in her December budget.

### **Legislative Session**

The State Board of Education will have opportunities, early in session, to present its accountability bill to the education committees. These first few weeks of session will be critical for policy issues. Most likely, policy bills will need to be passed out of the House of Representatives' Education Committee by the end of the third week and passed out of the Senate's Early Learning and K-12 Education Committee by the middle or end of the fourth week.

The confirmation hearing and reappointments of Mary Jean Ryan, Sheila Fox, and Jeff Vincent will also occur. During session, each Board member will receive a hearing in the Senate's Early Learning and K-12 Education Committee. After passing out of committee, the reappointments will be considered by the full Senate on the chamber floor. The reappointments by the Governor will remain in effect if the Senate does not find time during the short session to hear and approve the reappointments.

Below is a list of issues that will emerge during session and the agencies or organizations that are involved with them:

- The Office of Financial Management and legislative fiscal committees:
  - Budget shortfall and revenue sources.
  - Race to the Top.
  - State fiscal stabilization fund.
- State Board of Education:
  - System Performance Accountability.
- Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction:
  - Reducing the high school dropout rate.
  - Mathematics and science high school graduation requirements.
  - STEM and middle school CTE.
- Professional Educator Standards Board:
  - Incorporating Cultural Competency.
  - Master Teacher Designation.
  - Preservice Assessment of Instructional Effectiveness.
- Department of Early Learning:
  - Establishing within basic education a program of early learning for at-risk children.
- In addition, the following groups will be presenting reports and recommendations to the legislature:
  - Quality Education Council.
  - Achievement Gap Oversight Committee.
  - OSPI's Digital Learning Department.
  - K-12 Data Governance Group.
  - Financial Education Public-Private Partnership.